

THE FRONTLINE

SPORTS & RECREATION

OCTOBER 7, 2010

TIME OUT!



Commentary by
Jennifer Hartwig
Fort Stewart
Public Affairs

I'm about to say something that a lot of people think, so female sports fan should say out loud – I don't like watching women's sports.

I'm certainly not the only one.

ESPN occasionally shows women's college or professional basketball games, and each time as they pan the crowd, almost half of the seats are empty.

So I'm not the only one who isn't watching.

Even the now-extinct XFL drew more viewers than women's professional sports; the average 3 million households tuning in was more than triple the size of the average WNBA game, and was 30 times that of women's professional soccer.

Then I start to wonder if I should feel bad that I, as a woman, don't enjoy watching women's sports.

I may be betraying my own, but I can't bring myself to watch. I sit back and think, when was the last time I watched a women's basketball game?

That would be a big fat never. The last time I can even remember watching an entire women's team sporting event was the 1999 Women's World Cup. I watch women's gymnastics if it's on TV, or I'll watch the women's individual events in the Olympics, like gymnastics, track and swimming. But when the team sports come on, the channel changes in my house.

I can name at least one player on each NBA team, but I have to rack my brain to think of more than a few WNBA players - Lisa Leslie, Sheryl Swoopes and Diana Taurasi are the only that pop into my head at first thought, and I think some of them are retired.

As an appreciator of sports, why can't I bring myself to watch women at the highest level?

There is a reason I love professional and college sports and that is because it is athletes performing at the highest level. No one else in the world but Usain Bolt of Jamaica has run 100 meters in 9.58 seconds; no one but Adrian Peterson or Chris Johnson could cut through a one-yard hole between two 350-pound defensive linemen and run 40 yards to the end zone.

I love watching Dwight Howard soar over defenders to throw down dunk; I love seeing Cristiano Ronaldo sprint past a defender and then send a kick that beats the goalie as it rockets to the back of the net. The best part about hockey is the hitting – ask any fan. So if that is the case, then where is our incentive to watch women's ice hockey, since there is no hitting or checking allowed?

These are things that women just can't do physically in sports. I certainly don't like it, but I have to accept it. The world's fastest-ever woman, Florence Griffith-Joyner, wouldn't have even made the semifinals in the men's 100 meters at the 2009 World Championships.

Of course, I think it is very important for females to participate in sports. I participated in sports from the time I was 6 through high school, and most of my close friends were teammates. Sports kept me healthy and active, and helped develop my social skills.

But the issue isn't whether or not I think women's sports are important – there is no question about that.

See TIMEOUT — Page 11B

Soldiers participate in Rocky Elite Iron Warrior Competition

Spc. Cassandra Monroe
135th MPAD

CONTINGENCY OPERATING BASE SPEICHER, Iraq – Enter the Task Force Marne Headquarters building at COB Speicher, near Tikrit, Iraq, and the noticeable sound of typing and clicking, hurried steps and multiple conversations will fill the hallways.

But on the night of Oct. 2, the building was silent. Instead, the noise was present in the back compound of the headquarters, where cheers and claps, paired with adrenaline-pumping music, filled the area.

Soldiers gathered at the compound for the Rocky Elite Iron Warrior Competition, a competition that tested the endurance of both males and females in a three-series weight lifting event. The events included the squat, bench press and dead-lift.

“Basically, these events will test your overall strength,” said Chief Warrant Officer Christopher Hoo, the 3rd Infantry Division Unmanned Aircraft System standardization and safety officer. “It's a morale booster for guys and girls who lift all the time and don't get any recognition for it. We're going to do something for those guys. Now, here's [an event] for the weightlifters and power lifters.”



Spc. Cassandra Monroe

Master Sergeant Edward Wright, the Inspector General's noncommissioned officer in charge, 3rd Infantry Division, participates in the dead-lift event during the Rocky Elite Iron Warrior Competition at Contingency Operating Base Speicher, near Tikrit, Iraq, Oct. 2. The competition tested the endurance of both males and females in a three-series weight lifting event, which included the squat, the bench press and the dead-lift. Master Sergeant Wright took first place for the male's competition with 1,385 total pounds lifted.

See WARRIOR — Page 11B

Top of Iraq run trains Soldiers for 10-Miler

Sgt. Johnathon Jobson
Task Force Marne Public Affairs

Contingency Operating Base Speicher, Iraq – Task Force Marne servicemembers and civilians have spent the last three months running – training for the Task Force Marne 10-Miler, to be precise. Approximately 60 runners are pre-registered and close to 300 people are expected to take part in the race on COB Speicher, Oct. 10.

The 10-miler, which shadows the Army 10-Miler to be held in Washington, D.C., Oct. 24, is the last of three races. The preceding 5K “Why Not Run” and 10K “Top of Iraq” runs were set up as training events to help prepare the Soldiers that are planning to run the TF Marne 10-Miler.

The TF G-6 leadership team of Lt. Col. Maria Biank and Sgt. Maj. Charles Friend are using the runs to set the example for Soldiers to show that there is always time for physical fitness. The series of runs are designed to give Soldiers intermediate goals to build up to the 10 miler.

“A lot of Soldiers have said that they want to run [the 10-miler],” said 1st Lt. Emily Baldo, a clinical staff nurse in the 21st Combat Support Hospital emergency room, and officer in charge of all three runs. “The shorter runs give them smaller goals to meet on their way to the 10-miler. They also give the Soldiers something to look forward to.”

See RUN — Page 11B

Sgt. Johnathon Jobson
Lieutenant Colonel Maria Biank, the Task Force Marne Signal Officer, wearing number 283 takes off at the start of the Top of Iraq 10K run on Contingency Operating Base Speicher, Iraq, Sept. 24.



TF Gambler ushers in new football season

Capt. Ross J. Schuchard
TF Gambler, 3rd CAB, TF Falcon

FORWARD OPERATING BASE SHARANA, Afghanistan – Fall officially arrived at FOB Sharana with the kick off of the much anticipated 2010 football season. Living in Afghanistan poses some major obstacles to achieving the same level of game-watching capabilities as back home, but the constructive ingenuity of a few of the Task Force Gambler, 3rd Combat Aviation Brigade, TF Falcon, Soldiers made the difference minimal at FOB Sharana.

“After working very hard establishing our unit footprint at FOB Sharana over the summer months, we all started recognizing football season was around the corner,” said 1st Lt. Dedrick Johnson, executive officer of Company E, TF Gambler, from Killeen, Texas. “Since we had become very accustomed to constructing some of our own facilities, we decided it would be a great idea to build a facility to accommodate the many Soldiers that

were anticipating watching the upcoming football season.”

Facilities are at a premium in a deployed environment and with the task force's Morale, Welfare and Recreation building still under construction. The unit had to improvise and utilize organic assets to construct a venue. The approved remedy was a large tent with wood flooring equipped with two televisions and an AFN tower.

The two main forces behind the construction effort were Spc. Carlos Rojas, from Orlando, Fla., and Guillermo Mejia, from Staten Island, N.Y., both members of TF Gambler's Forward Support Company. Ironically, neither Soldier is a sports fan, but when approached to take on the task, they took the opportunity to use their general contracting backgrounds to provide their fellow Soldiers with something that would boost their morale and provide a place of fellowship.

“After gathering the necessary construction tools and supplies, we set

out to get the building done prior to opening weekend of the college football season,” said Spc. Rojas. “Many Soldiers helped out in their off-duty time to help us get the project done, and we met our deadline for the season opener.”

Since the successful construction project, dubbed “The Thunderdome,” was completed, the building has hosted two weeks of games and other task force events such as church services, promotion ceremonies and classes.

“I really enjoyed using my construction experience to help make our unit's area more enjoyable and to provide my fellow task force Soldiers with a place to hang out and have a good time,” said Pfc. Mejia.

“It is a true testament to the creativity and resourcefulness of our Soldiers to develop such a positive morale booster and provide our unit with a great outlet from the everyday stressors of a combat environment,” said Lt. Col. Jeffery Thompson, commander of TF Gambler.

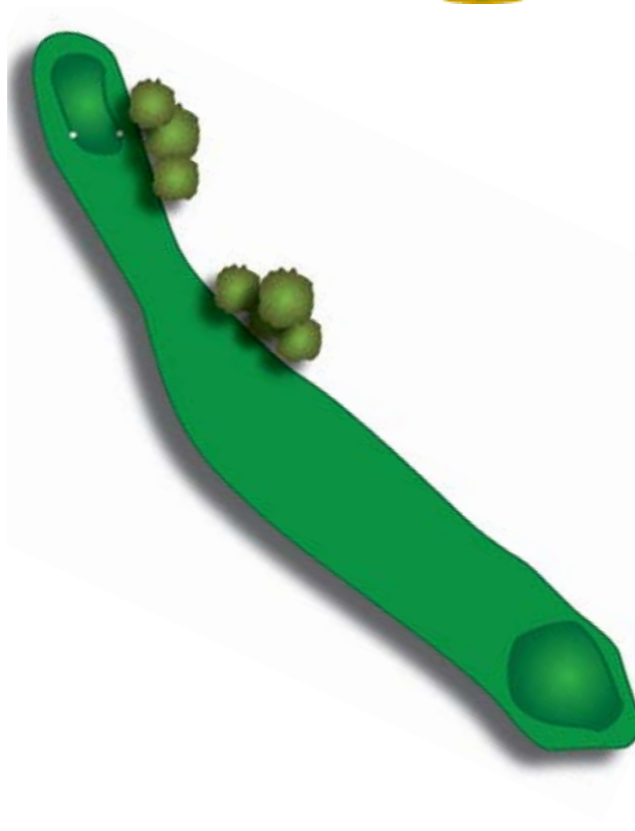


Special to The Frontline

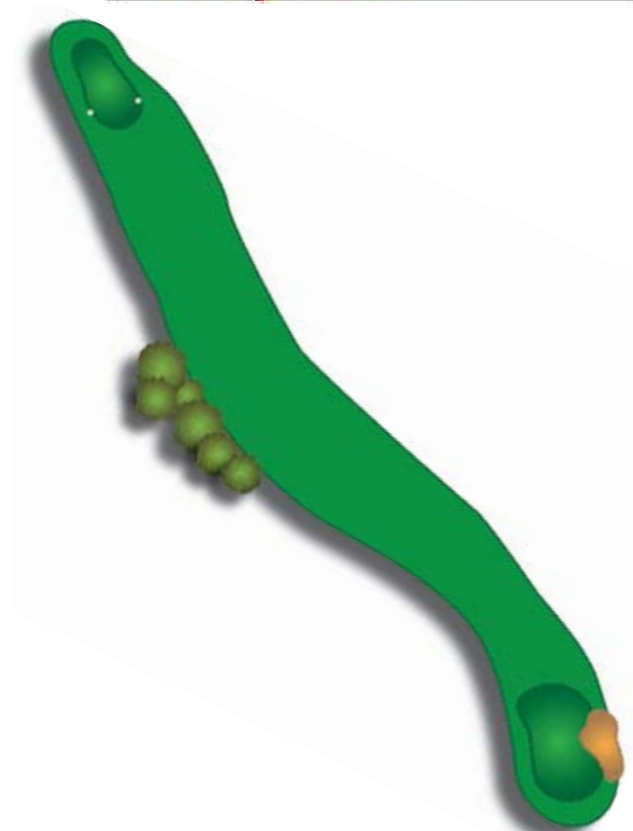
Over the course of the next few weeks, The Frontline will bring you a hole-by-hole rundown of the Hunter Golf Course. Written by Fort Stewart and Hunter Army Airfield Golf Pro Tommie McArthur, each installment will give you tips on each hole, such as which club to use and how to set up your shots.



Hole #1 – A good opening hole to start your round with a par or birdie. A driver is needed on this dogleg right Par 5. Aim for the left center of the fairway to avoid trees on the right and a small ditch just left of the rough. With a good tee shot, you can reach the green. If you are laying up, aim at the bunker on the left of the green to avoid a deep ditch, about 30 yards short of the green on the right.



Hole #2 – A sharp dogleg left Par 4 requires a well placed tee shot with a long iron or 3 wood. Avoid the left woods at any cost, there is too much trouble there. A good tee shot should leave you with a short iron into a receptive green. If you want a challenge, play this hole from the Black Tee, a 260 yard tee shot to get to the fairway and still have a long iron into a small elevated green.



Hole #3 – One of our signature holes at Hunter Golf Club. A well hit drive is a must here. Try to stay as far left as you can to avoid getting behind one of the two majestic oaks on the right side of this hole. If you push your tee shot you will be dealing with both of them. A mid to long iron is still required to hit this tough green. The bunker on the left should be avoided. Leaving it short is okay here.

WARRIOR

—from Page 9B

The event was the idea of the 1,000 Pound Club's avid 3rd ID weightlifters.

"I'm always in the gym lifting, and I listen to the Soldiers, and they're always saying, 'Why don't we put something together. They put other events on for other things, so why don't we do something?'" said Chief Warrant Officer Hoo. "So, I basically just took the Soldiers' ideas and ran with it."

With each event, competitors had three chances to get their highest weight lift, ensuring optimal opportunities to get their highest score. Competitors had to have a combined score of 1,000 pounds for males and 500 pounds for females, in all three events.

Only the top three male and female competitors will be recognized, but the event served as a great break for Soldiers who participated in the event, as well as those who observed.

"It's a morale booster, just to get [Soldiers'] minds off of work," said Spc. Tommy Thornton, a targeting analyst with Headquarters and Headquarters Operations Company, Division Special Troops Battalion, 3rd ID. "It can be a

stressful job out here in Iraq, being deployed. [This competition] is something to release stress and working out to get away.

"Most people came out there to see what we can do," he continued. "We've been out here for a year now ... Everybody takes the time to lift weights during that year, for fun, but more so just to see where they're at."

Sergeant First Class Shonn Loftin, a G-3 airspace management noncommissioned officer with 3rd ID, also believes that events like these help sustain deployments.

"It gives Soldiers something else to think about or concentrate on while being deployed," said Sgt. 1st Class Loftin. "It [also] gives Soldiers a physical fitness goal to work toward. For some Soldiers who participated in the competition, placing in the top three wasn't the only goal they wanted to achieve. Some Soldiers wanted to participate so they could gauge their physical fitness strengths. This event is to motivate younger Soldiers and to inspire younger soldiers to continue

physical fitness."

The winners for the event will be awarded a Commanding General's coin, and a Certificate of Achievement. Promotion points were awarded to junior enlisted Soldiers who placed in the top three slots.

In the male competition, Master Sgt. Edward Wright, Inspector General's Office, came in first place with 1,385 pounds; Sgt. 1st Class Loftin, G-3 Air, took second with 1,300 pounds; Capt. Todd Schwartz, 21st Combat Surgical Hospital, came in third place with 1,275 pounds.

For the females, Sgt. 1st Class Cleopatra Griggs-Adams, G-6, came in first place with 665 pounds; Capt. Melissa Johnson, G-2, followed closely with 625 pounds and Capt. Shaquella Whitt, CBRN-E, came in third with 580 pounds.



Spc. Cassandra Monroe

Captain Shaquella Whitt, the force protection officer in charge with Headquarters and Headquarters Operations Company, Division Special Troops Battalion, 3rd Infantry Division, performs the squat exercise during the Rocky Elite Iron Warrior Competition. Captain Whitt came in third in the overall competition with 580 total pounds lifted.

TIMEOUT!

—from Page 9B

The fact of the matter is I don't care to watch women's sports, and I don't really feel bad about it.

Maybe what I need to do is stop comparing the women's game to men's; there is no doubt that men are stronger, taller, faster and generally more competitive. I should try to appreciate women's sports for what they are, for how they inspire young girls, and how they have helped us lessen the equality gap.

As we're on the subject, you're probably wondering my feelings on Title IX. I have no problem with women's sports getting money equal to men's, but I do have a problem when a successful men's team is cut because of funding that has to be given to a women's sport.

So, I love that women play sports; I love participating in sports. But I don't like that they are trying to shove the WNBA or women's NCAA tournament down my throat - I don't want to watch.

RUN

—from Page 9B

For Sgt. Maj. Friend, running is a passion, and the upcoming 10-miler is something he looks forward to.

"I first started running long distance in 1996; I tried out for the 35th Signal Brigade Army 10-Miler team. I made the team and have been running ever since," said Sgt. Maj. Friend, a native of Grand Rapids, Mich. "Every year, I try to do the 10-mile run, no matter where I am. This will be the third time I have run the 10-Miler in Iraq.

"There isn't really a difference running here, in a deployed environment. You just have to make sure you have more breaks and rest stops and stay hydrated," added Sgt. Maj. Friend.

Lieutenant Colonel Biank, a Williamsburg, Va., native, is using a 12-week training program to get ready for the 10-miler.

"I am very much a novice when it comes

to training for longer runs and races, said Lt. Col. Biank. "I use a 12-week training model. It starts off with two- and three-mile runs and increase one week at a time. It gradually increases the distance so that you don't hurt yourself by going out and running 10 miles when your body isn't used to it.

"I run about four days a week. I usually do one long run, seven, eight or nine miles, each week because of where I am at in the training model. The other run days are just a bit shorter. I also do two days of cross training. I use the treadmill, the exercise bike, or a similar exercise to get away from the [impact], and use different muscles," she added.

This is not Lt. Col. Biank's first 10-miler. She is also an Army 10-Miler veteran.

"I have run two Army 10-Milers," Lt. Col. Biank said. "It's just a fabulous race;

a lot of people, a lot of great energy there. It is a great route through Washington, D.C., seeing all of the monuments and the sites."

Since there are no monuments at COB Speicher, and the landscape is rather barren, Soldiers will be setting up "spirit stands" to help keep morale high.

Major General Tony Cucolo, the TF Marne commanding general, wanted water points at every mile marker along the route, explained 1st Lt. Baldo. After 10 miles, the route would get boring, so they came up with the idea of spirit stands, she said.

"Units that are located near the mile markers were tasked to run the spirit stands," said 1st Lt. Baldo. "They can decorate the stand as extravagantly as they wish. There will be awards for the most spirited stand with the most people out to cheer on the runners."